11/12/73

Dear Mr. Shepherd,

Your honesty, willingness and taking of time when you are busy with what has to appear to be more promising are kindnesses I do appreciate. I am aware of the problem you emphasize and others you have not even mentioned. I do not believe it or they are the most serious. although from your experience you probably believe the one is more than enough.

I would have written you tonight or tomorrow in sending what is enclosed and to explain part. My wife is nearing the end of the chapter than is really a part and like each could be a separate book, "This Is Your FBI," by L. Patrick Gray, Former Director. That is enclosed and what should have been included instead of the chapter, Clues, which I intended to junk, as I did other of the earlier writing. When I reread Clues after I have finished writing, if there is anything that should be included, I'll then add it.

With the best of luck much of the first part will have to go. It was written when there was a possibility of German publication and the representatives of that publisher wanted some of those things. This is also true of the chapter on the law that preceeds or follows it. If that were to be retained, I think it should be in an appendix of a new introduction. They wanted a much more personalized book than I am writing and could write.

From here on, if as I presume you will be when you receive this, you are busy, skip it or let it wait until later. What I will be saying will, in time, become clear to you, I think, and the only immediate purpose it can serve is remote, you may speak to a publisher who may be interested.

First, organization. You are correct. As of today, when I have an opinion of what will eventuate but am not certain, I am not at all certain of what the organization should be. Events can influence this. I am aware that I am writing much more than can be published. There are a number of reasons. So, I am trying to compartmentalize the writing to make for easy editing and elimination. What size and kind of book any publisher may prefer I have no way of knowing. So, I'm trying to address this as well as what may yet happen and, because there is no encouragement on publication, trying to make what I do not think will be made, a fairly comprehensive, contextual record if only for history. This is going to be an enormous rough draft. Thus, I do permit myself slight encouragement from your " strongest sympathy and interest," which I take to be personal rather than professional. If you will be interested enough to persevere, perhaps in the end you may see possibilities that you now do not. Once there was no prospect for an instant book, I saw no meaningful alternative to what I am doing.

There is great fear about all of this. The Jaworski scandal is but one example. There has been exposure. There is supposed to be more. I have the UPI wire copy of their first story. In most places it was simply ignored, which to me means suppressed. Jaworski has already lied about this. Several of the reporters I have been backgrounding have kept me posted. I have collected more evidence. If I do not use it in this book I will in one I had to lay aside, Agent Oswald. I have about five chapters of it done. One deals with this. I'll be filing a Freedom of Information suit on it soon. Tomorrow. My lawyer just left. It has become part of The Watergate story, through Ford, who swore falsely about this a week ago today. This may seem confusing to you, but if you are interested I'll send you a copy of what we file. I drafted the Complaint early this morning, he'll revise it tonight and file it in federal court in the morning. Ford copyrighted and sold classified information (wrongly classified but still classified, as of Friday evening, when the Washington Post reporter I've been working with checked it out) on Oswald as an agent, one of those things Jaworski covered up

when he was the State of Texas' chief investigator in the JFK assassination. I've just sent the Post a Jaworski letter of May 8, 1964 in which he reports a deal with the editor of one of the papers that printed a story offering to run a debunking story, disavowing the original story (and the reporter doesn't work for him any more, either!). CIA and FBI both involved.

Back to orgahization: I am trying to write so that whatever happens, the writing will be accurate, not requiring of an editor what no editor can be expected to know. In what you now have, all that has come to pass requires but one change. Segretti denied one of the dirty tricks attributed to him. In about 500 pages, this is not a bad record. If Nixon resigns, is impeached, quits because he says he is sick and the country requires a fresh, healthy, vigorous President, stages a military coup or is ousted by one, in these 500 pages there is no single word that will require changing. Coping, and I think successfully, with a breaking story of the magnitude of this one - and believe me, please, it will get more complicated as he gets more and more caught up in his lies and crookedness, including on overuse of the memory hole - necessarily makes for other problems, one organizational. In attempting to compartmentalize many parts of the story, each of which could be a separate large book, what I am attempting is to make it possible for an editor to shift them around at some future time with no major problem in rearranging and hopefully no more than a bit of literary connective tissue to tie it together. Meanwhile, although it is complicated by the inclusion of the two chapters mentioned above, what I have attempted to do is to weave all the different books into one with several things in mind: making the incredible credible; having it build, likes a detective story; making the unheard of comprehensible; laying a foundation for what will follow; keeping my options open while accomodating anything that can happen; delaying writing what will still break until it breaks; and saving the best for last. Except for the fragment I roughed out when it was fresh in mind and sent you long ago, you have seen almost no mention of the CIA. There will not be room in even an overly-long book for what I already have in hand. And Nixon is, personally and directly involved in this story, the part not written. I do not need more than I have but while writing I am still collecting and I am again laying the foundation for going into court on a civil action to get it. Nixon's is the biggest name. There are a number of others also prominent - and very, very silent.

One of the complications I have to deal with is the whitewashing by the terrified Senate. I am working some in where it is relevant, as in the police-state part. Pressures may force them to be more vigorous, to hide less. They show signs, for example, of going back to what I sent you, their deficiencies on Cox and Hughes. But I have postponed that part of the writing, and when I do it, it will not have to be changed other than an editor would change.

Once an instant book was out, my target was a book that could be edited into a substantial work that could, with publisher willingness, appear with the Senate's report, which will be a tinted whitewash. You have been honest in expressing your opinion that it is beyond the capacity of any one man. I believe that it is possible with publisher willingness, which means also editing. And I believe it is possible, after all that has been published, to have new, fresh and sensational content. Time will tell, perhaps influenced by your personal sympathy and interest.

And for these I again thanks you.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg